Bigha Corridor to Bangladesh. As stipulated in 1982 Agreement, sovereignty over the leased area shall contiue to vest in India.

The residents of Kuchlibari and others as also Indian officials and law enforcing agencies will continue to have the right of free and unfetterred movement in the leased area in either direction.

Production of coal and its price

270. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantum of coal production so far during this year and what is the expected target and whether it would fulfil the requirement of our economy;

(b) whether it is a fact that coal contains ash; if so, what is the percentage thereof; and

(c) what was the price of the coal on the day of nationalisation and what is the price today indicating the reasons for such differences in prices?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) All India coal production during the period April, 91 to October, 91 was of the order of 111.29 million tonnes. The target for coal production for the year 1991-92 has been fixed at 228.00 m.t. The anticipated demand for 1991-92 is 239.10 m.t., which will be more or less met from the current production and stocks which stood at approximately 42 m.t. as on 1.4.91. Some requirements of steel sector for high quality coking coal will have to be met by imports.

(b) Yes, Sir. Indian coals generally have high ash content and low calorific value. The average ash content of coal being mined presently varies between 35 per cent to 45 per cent.

(c) With relation to coal produced by Coal India Limited mines, the average pit need price of coal at the time of nationalisation in 1974 and 1975 was Rs. 37.50 per tonne and the average pit head price at present is Rs. 249/- per tonne. The increase in prices is mainly due to (i) increased wage cost (ii) increase in input cost etc.

Tourists from USA and European countries warned not to visit India

271. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that USA and some European countries have warned their citizens not be visit India; and

(b) fi so, what are details including the steps taken by Government of India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Travel advisories are generally issued by the foreign Governments on the basis of reported events of law and order problems. The matter has already been taken up with the respective Governments through diplomatic channels.

Increase in Visa Fee

272. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHR KAMAL MORARKA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether visa fee has been increased recently;

(b) if so,, what are the details thereof and the reasons of increase in visa fee;

(c) what is the amount of additional income that is likely to be derived as a result thereof;

(d) whether Government are aware of its negative impact on inflow of tourists to India;

(e) whether there have been protests especially in Malaysia and Singapore against this hike;

(f) if so, what steps Government are taking in this regard; and

(g) whether Government propose to reconsider its decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Visa fee which prior to November, 91 was different for different nationalities and different for single double|triple|multiple entries have been now rationalised, it now depends upon duration of its validity. Reasons for increase in visa fee are:

(i)In 1990 the visa regime was liberalised and the duration of visa was extended upon 5 years but the visa fee was not appropriately increased.

(ii) The recent devaluation of Indian rupee made it imparative to revise the visa fee upwards.

(iii) Indian visa fee was reduced unilaterally in favour of nationals of UK; USA; FRG; France; Spain; Italy and Netherlands. But these countries did not reciprocate to our action.

(iv) Increasing local cost of running consular and visa services at Missions|Posts abroad.

(v) Mobilising funds or proper staffing and modernisation of the Consular Section in our Mission abroad, for further improving the quality of services.

(c) Rs. 100 crore (approximately) over a year.

(d) and (e) The upward revision of visa fee is not likely to materially affect the inflow of tourists. Tourists are not attracted so much by low visa fee as by other conditions facilitating tourism such as peace and tranquility, tourist infracture expeditious services etc. As a matter of fact visa fees are a very small fraction of the total expenses incurred by a tourist. However there have been some representations against the increase in visa fees.

(f) and (g) The Government policy in the matter is constantly kept under review.

Import of Cotton

273. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with the Central Government to import cotton;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what is the quantity and value of cotton proposed to be imported; and

(d) what is the coal foreing exchange commitment involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Cost of production of coal

274. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the cost of production of coal in different collierjes in the country;